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A school lunch for every child

•U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD DISTRIBUTION ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C., FEBRUARY 1943

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Changes in operation of the purchase plan for the Community School Lunch Program have recently been made by the Food Distribution Administration. Answers to the following questions show how the new plan functions.

1.Q. How does the new program differ from the previous program?

A. Previously foods were purchased by the Food Distribution Administration as a part of the market stabilization program and sent to the State welfare agencies which stored and distributed them to school lunch sponsors. Now, the sponsors will be able to buy certain food supplies direct from local farmers and merchants and be reimbursed by the FDA for the cost.

2.Q. What conditions brought about these changes?

A. Lack of workers in warehouses, and shortages of trucks, tires, and gasoline made it impossible for welfare departments to carry on warehousing and delivery services.

3.Q. Why do communities want to continue the Community School Lunch Program?

A. Now more than ever before, when many mothers are engaged in defense work, children need a nutritious noon meal. All children should be assured the proper kind and quantities of foods during their formative years. Without the School Lunch Program many children from poor and well-to-do homes alike would suffer.

4.Q. What are the advantages of the new program to the community?

A. The local purchases will (1) increase the consumption of seasonally abundant foods close to the area of production, resulting in a more complete utilization of the crops produced by the farmers of the community; (2) take some of the load off our already overworked transportation system; (3) stimulate greater community interest in school lunch activities as a major contribution to national nutrition; (4) encourage expansion of community gardening, canning, and preserving.

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5.Q. Will the former program of food distribution be abandoned?

A. No, in some large areas, principally metropolitan, where adequate transportation and warehousing facilities permit, food will be bought and distributed by FDA as formerly.

6.Q. Will the new program then be set up only in rural and urban centers?

A. No, it will operate in large and small communities, in city and country. In such circumstances as mentioned above, the old plan will simply supplement the new.

7.Q. What is the function of the Food Distribution Administration in the program?

A. The FDA directs and oversees the program. It designates specific commodities which sponsoring agencies may purchase. Foods will be designated according to their nutritive value and their availability. The FDA will reimburse the sponsors for the cost of the commodities purchased, up to a specified maximum amount, provided prescribed conditions are met by the sponsors.

8.Q. Who may sponsor the program?

A. School systems or boards, parent-teacher groups, American Legion posts or other civic or service organization may sponsor it.

9.Q. What is the function of the sponsor?

A. The sponsor is the operator of the program. The sponsor's responsibilities include the purchasing, handling, and storage of commodities; supervision of the preparation and serving of meals, and compliance with all laws pertaining to the serving of food in public places; making meals available to all children in attendance and at no cost to those unable to pay; making no distinction between paying and nonpaying children; submitting of invoices of purchases and reports of operation to the FDA.

10.Q. Who may participate in the program?

A. Any nonprofit public, or private school may participate in the program, provided such school is of high school grade or under. In addition, nonprofit child-welfare centers, child day-care centers, play grounds, boy's and girl's clubs, summer camps, etc. may participate.

11.Q. Are the sponsors required to contribute anything toward the program cost?

A. Yes, the sponsors pay for the labor involved, equipment, maintenance costs, and for any foods above the maximum amounts allowed by FDA.

12.Q. What will the charge be for the school lunch?

A. The sponsor will determine the amount each child will pay, but in all cases where a child cannot afford the slight charge of the meal, he will receive it free of cost.

13.Q. How many children are participating in the program?

A. Last year a peak of over 6,000,000 children benefited from school lunch programs using foods made available by the FDA. This year many more children will probably participate.

14.Q. Where should groups write to obtain further information about the Community School Lunch Program?

A. To the office of the Food Distribution Administration nearest them.

Write to the FOOD DISTRIBUTION ADMINISTRATION at one of the following addresses:

5 South Wabash Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

700 Old Colony Building
Des Moines, Iowa

821 Market Street
San Francisco, California

1536 Welton Street
Denver, Colorado

425 Wilson Building
Dallas, Texas

Western Union Building
Atlanta, Georgia

150 Broadway
New York, New York